POL 14 VIETS

Department of State TELEGRAM

858

CONFIDENTIAL

Saigon 3531 8-19-67

PAGE 01 SAIGON 03531 191314Z

50
ACTION EA 19

INFO SP 02,SS 35,GPM 03,SC 01,NSC 10,RSC 01,RSR 01,NSCE 00,CIAE 00,
SSO 00,DODE 00,USIE 00,NSAE 00,CCO 00,SAH 03,SAL 01,P 04,INR 07,
L 03,H 02,/092 W

---

0 4 191100Z AUG 67
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4901
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK 3890
CINCPAC
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE 2198

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY Joan Izenberg DATE 10/6/81
RDS ☐ or XDS ☐ EXT. DATE
TS AUTH. REASON(S)
ENDORSE EXISTING MARKINGS ☐
DECLASSIFIED ☑ RELEASABLE ☑
RELEASE DENIED ☐
PA or FOI EXEMPTIONS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 3531

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

REF: A. STATE 23250 B. SAIGON 3447

1. AUGUST 19 EDITION ENGLISH LAGUAGE DAILIES SAIGON POST AND SAIGON DAILY NEWS HEADLINE REACTION OF CIVILIAN PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES TO JAVITS' PROPOSAL THAT PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS BE

PAGE 2 RUMJIR 3531 C O N F I D E N T I A L
POSTPONED FOUR WEEKS REPORTS APPARENTLY BASED ON SEPARATE INTERVIEWS OF CANDIDATES BY AP CORRESPONDENTS SOMETIME AFTER CANDIDATES' JOINT APPEARANCE AT GIA DINH AUGUST 18 (REF B).

2. REPORTS QUOTE TRAN VAN HUONG AS FAVORING EXTENSION OF CAMPAIGN PERIOD BUT NOT FOR TOO LONG LEST VOTERS LOSE INTEREST. TRUONG DINH DZU QUOTED AS FAVORING TWO WEEK POSTPONEMENT. DR. DAN, ON OTHER HAND, REPORTED TO BE AGAINST IDEA OF POST-

CONFIDENTIAL

DECLASSIFIED

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 SAIGON 03531 1913147

PONEMENT ARGUINGTHAT CANDIDATE NOT ALREADY KNOWN BY POPULATION DON'T DESERVE TO IN AND EXTENSION OF CAMPAIGN WOULD NOT DO SUCH CANDIDATES MUCH GOOD ANYWAY.

3. VERNACULAR PRESS ALSO REPORTING JAVITS' STATEMENT, THOUGH GENERALLY NOT AS LEAD STORY.

4. WE HAVESEVERAL COMMENTS WITH RESPECT TO JAVITS PROPOSAL. FIRST, HE CORRECTLY STATES THAT POSTPONEMENT OF ELECTION UNTIL OCT 1 FEASIBLE FROM CONSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL VIEWPOINT. HE

FURTHER STATES THAT THIS CHANGE COULD BE EFFECTED BY ACT OF

PAGE 3 RUMJIR 3531 C O N F I D E N T I A L
NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OR POSSIBLY EVEN BY ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION UNDER ARTICLE 3 OF ELECTION LAW. OUR UNDERSTANDING IS THAT ARTICLE 3 PRIMARILY INTENDED TO APPLY TO INSTANCES WHERE LOCAL SECURITY CONDITIONS DO NOT PERMIT BALLOTING ON ELECTION DAY. WE ARE QUITE CERTAIN THAT VIETNAMESE, BOTH IN GVN AND IN NATIONAL ASSEMBLY DO NOT INTERPRET ARTICLE 3 TO GRANT GOVRNMENT AUTHORITY FOR UNILATERAL NATION-WIDE POSTPONEMENT OF ELECTION. THUS, ONLY WAY WHICH ELECTION DATE COULD BE CHANGED WOULD BE THROUGH PASSAGE OF AMENDMENT TO ELCTION LAW BY NATIONAL ASSEMBLY. AMENDMENT WOULD HAVE VIRTUALLY NO CHANCE OF PASSAGE WITHOUT DIRECTORATE SUPPORT. IT IS DIFFICULT TO IMAGINE THE DIRECTORATE, INCLUDIING THIEU AND KY, ENDORSING SUCH A PROPOSAL, PARTICULARLY SINCE ANY SUCH CHANGE WOULD BE WIDELY INTERPRETED HERE AS BOWING TO US PRESSURE.

5. SECOND IT IS BY NO MEANS CLEAR THAT ALL CIVILIAN CANDIDATES FAVOR POSTPONEMENT OF THE ELECTION. AT LEAST ONE MAJOR CIVILIAN

SLATE, THAT OF SUU/DAN, APPEARS TO BE AGAINST THE IDEA AND COULD VIEW REVISION OF ELECTION DATE AS UNFAIR LAST-MINUTE CHANGE IN GROUND RULES.

CONFIDENTIAL

DECLASSIFIED

Department of State TELEGRAM

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 SAIGON 03531 191314Z

PAGE 4 RUMJIR 3531 C O N F I D E N T I A L
6. THIRD, VAST ADMINISTRATIVE PREPARATIONS FOR UPPER HOUSE AND PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS HAVE BEEN UNDERWAY FOR MORE THAN TWO MONTHS NOW, ALL GEARED TO SEPT 3 ELECTIONDATE, ONLY TWO WEEKS AWAY. DESPITE ADVERSE SECURITY CONDITIONS, POOR ACCESS TO REMOTE AREAS AND IMPERFECT METHODS OF COMMUNICATION, THESE ARRANGEMENTS HAVE BEEN MOVING ALONG SATISFACTORILY. WE ARE NOT IN A POSITION TO ASSESS THE EFFECT A TWO-WEEK POSTPONEMENT OF THE ELECTION WOULD HAVE ON THESE PREPARATION BUT IT WOULD CERTAINLY GIVE RISE TO CERTAIN AMOUNTOF ADMINISTRATIVE CONFUSION. IT WOULD ALSO MEAN PROLONGING PERIOD DURING WHICH GVN, BOTH ADMINISTRATIVELY AND MILITARILY, PREOCCUPIED BY ELECTIONS AT EXPENSE OF OTHER URGENT MATTERS.

6, ON BALANCE WE BELIEVE JAVITS PROPOSAL IS NOT LIKELY TO BE GIVEN SERIOUS CONSIDERATION BY GVN OR NATIONAL ASSEMBLY. IN OUR PRIVATE CONTACTS WITH LEADERS HERE, WE PLAN, IF ASKED, TO TAKE LINE THAT JAVITS, AS A SENATOR, IS OF COURSE NOT SPEAKING FOR ADMINISTRATION AND THAT MATTERS SUCH AS THESE ARE FOR VIETNAMESE TO DECIDE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THEIR OWN CONSTITUTION AND ELECTORAL LAW.
BUNKER

CONFIDENTIAL

DECLASSIFIED